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Malaise

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MALAISE

Lauren Smart

Balanced between cold and then hot
Is some unknown substance
That claims it's own spot.

Rarely declaring, complaining, or swearing
Muttering mumblings while
I go on caring.

It devours my joy, tearing
My angers in half
As if in defense of a word or a riddle.

It nearly moves forward
Then takes a step back
Like a friend who comes over
And then takes a nap.

I mean nothing rude
But perhaps a change of tune
Or be gone little demon.

I won't miss one bit
Your lukewarm encouragement
But when passion again expires my time
I'll call you dear friend, I'll drop you a line.

SPINSTERS, FULLY FURNISHED

Joe Milazzo

I lent her a cigarette. Actually, I gave it to her.
She didn't know it, but I was asking her to go away.
Shit, hold on; had I offered her comfort instead?
All I wanted was for it to be clear that she was no
comfort to me, that she filled me with impatience
that I was I just waiting for her sympathies to
expire behind a thin gray screen of exhaling. Then
I would be free to vanish into the mingling black
and white of the reception... the brown diffractions
swimming in a whiskey double. So she fished in her
purse for a lighter. And her hand found mine on
the railing. "Now, my grandmother," she said.



PLAY THAT GUITAR Elizabeth Fiechtner